

Troilus and
Criseyde.
Liber V.

And how the town was brent she tolde eek tho.
And so descendeth down from gestes olde
To Diomed, and thus she spak and tolde.

¶ This ilke boor bitokneth Diomed,
Tydeus sone, that doun descended is
fro Meleagre, that made the boor to blede.
And thy lady, wherso she be, ywis,
This Diomed hir herte hath, and she his.
Weep if thou wolt, or leef; for out of doute,
This Diomed is inne, and thou art oute.

¶ Thou seyst nat sooth, quod he, thou
sorceresse,
With al thy false goost of prophesye!
Thou wenest been a greet devyneresse;
Now seestow not this fool of fantasye
Peyneth hir on ladyes for to lye?
Hwey, quod he, ther Joves yewe thee sorwe!
Thou shalt be fals, paraunter, yet tomorwe!

As wel thou mightest lye on Alceste,
That was of creatures, but men lye,
That ever weren, kindest and the beste.
for whanne hir housbonde was in iupartye
To dye himself, but if she wolde dye,
She chees for him to dye and go to helle,
And starf anon, as us the bokes telle.

¶ Cassandre goth, and he with cruel herte
foryat his wo, for angre of hir speche;
And from his bed al sodeinly he sterte,
As though al hool him hadde ymad a leche.
And day by day he gan enquire and seche
A sooth of this, with al his fulle cure;
And thus he dryeth forth his aventure.

fortune, whiche that permutacioun
Of thinges hath, as it is hir committed
Through purveyaunce and disposicioun
Of heighe Jove, as regnes shal ben flitted
fro folk in folk, or whan they shal ben smitted,
Gan pulleaway the fetheres brighte of Troye
fro day to day, til they ben bare of joye.

Among al this, the fyn of the parodie
Of Ector gan approchen wonder blyve;
The fate wolde his soule sholde unbodie,
And shapen hadde a mene it out to dryve;
Ayeins which fate him helpeth not to stryve;
But on a day to figheten gan he wende,
At which, alas! he caughte his lyves ende.

for which me thinketh every maner wight
That haunteth armes oughte to biwayle
The deeth of him that was so noble a knight;
for as he drough a king by thaventayle,
Anwar of this, Achilles through the mayle
And through the body gan him for to ryve;
And thus this worthy knight was brought of lyve.

for whom, as olde bokes tellen us,
Was mad swich wo, that tonge it may not telle;

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And namely, the sorwe of Troilus,
That next him was of worthinesse welle.
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwelle,
That, what for sorwe, and love, and for
unreste,
ful ofte a day he bad his herte breste.

But natheles, though he gan him dispeyre,
And dradde ay that his lady was untrewre,
Yet ay on hir his herte gan repeyre.
And as these loveres doon, he soughte ay newe
To gete ayein Criseyde, bright of hewe.
And in his herte he wente hir excusinge,
That Calkas causede al hir taryinge.

And ofte tyme he was in purpos grete
Himselfen lyk a pilgrim to disgyse,
To seen hir; but he may not contrefete
To been unknownen of folk that weren wyse,
Ne finde excuse aright that may suffyse,
If he among the Grekes knownen were;
for which he weep ful ofte many a tere.

To hir he wroot yet ofte tyme al newe
ful pitously, he lefte it nought for slouthe,
Biseching hir that, sin that he was trewe,
She wolde come ayein and holde hir trouthe,
for which Criseyde upon a day, for routhe,
I take it so, touchinge al this matere,
Wrot him ayein, and seyde as ye may here.

¶ Cupydes sone, ensample of goodlihede,
O swerd of knighthod, sours of gentillesse!
How mighte a wight in torment and in drede
And helelees, yow sende as yet gladnesse?
I hertelees, I syke, I in distresse;
Sin ye with me, nor I with yow may dele,
Yow neither sende ich herte may nor hele.

Your lettres ful, the papir al ypleynted,
Conseyved hath myn hertes piëtee;
I have eek seyn with teres al depeynted
Your lettre, and how that ye requeren me
To come ayein, which yet ne may not be.
But why, lest that this lettre founden were,
No mencioniun ne make I now, for fere.

Grevous to me, God woot, is your unreste,
Your haste, and that, the goddes ordenaunce,
It semeth not ye take it for the beste.
Nor other thing nis in your remembraunce,
As thinketh me, but only your plesaunce.
But beth not wrooth, and that I yow biseche;
for that I tarie, is al for wikked speche.

for I have herd wel more than I wende,
Touchinge us two, how thinges han ystonde;
Which I shal with dissimulinge amende.
And beth nought wrooth, I have eek un-
derstonde,
How ye ne doon but holden me in honde.
But now no fors, I can not in yow gesse
But alle trouthe and alle gentillesse.

Comen I wol, but yet in swich disjoynte
I stonde as now, that what yeer or what day
That this shal be, that can I not apoynte.
But in effect, I prey yow, as I may,
Of your good word and of your frendship ay.
for trewely, whyl that my lyf may dure,
As for a freend, ye may in me assure.

Yet prey I yow on yvel ye ne take,
That it is short which that I to yow wryte;
I dar not, ther I am, wel lettres make,
Ne never yet ne coude I wel endyte.
Eek greet effect men wryte in place lyte.
Chentente is al, and nought the lettres space;
And fareth now wel, God have you in his grace!

La vostre C.

¶ This Troilus this lettre thoughte al straunge,
Whan he it saugh, and sorwefully he sighte;
him thoughte it lyk a kalendes of chaunge;
But fynally, he ful ne trowen mighte
That she ne wolde him holden that she highte;
for with ful yvel wil list him to leve
That loveth wel, in swich cas, though him greve.

But natheles, men seyn that, at the laste,
for any thing, men shal the sothe see;
And swich a cas bitidde, and that as faste,
That Troilus wel understood that she
Nas not so kinde as that hir oughte be.
And fynally, he woot now, out of doute,
That al is lost that he hath been aboute.

Stood on a day in his malencolye
This Troilus, and in suspicioun
Of hir for whom he wende for to dye.
And so bifel, that throughout Troye toun,
As was the gyse, ybore was up and doun
A maner cote/armure, as seyth the storie,
Bifrom Deiphebe, in signe of his victorie,

The whiche cote, as telleth Lollius,
Deiphebe it hadde yrent from Diomed
The same day; and whan this Troilus
It saugh, he gan to taken of it hede,
Aysying of the lengthe and of the brede,
And al the werk; but as he gan biholde,
ful sodeinly his herte gan to colde,

As he that on the coler fond withinne
A broche, that he Criseyde yaf that morwe
That she from Troye moste nedes twinne,
In remembraunce of him and of his sorwe;
And she him leyde ayein hir feyth to borwe
To kepe it ay; but now, ful wel he wiste,
his lady nas no lenger on to triste.

He gooth him boom, and gan ful sone sende
for Pandarus; and al this newe chaunce,
And of this broche, he tolde him word and ende,
Compleyninge of hir hertes variaunce,
his longe love, his trouthe, and his penaunce;
And after deeth, withouten wordes more,
ful faste he cryde, his reste him to restore.

Than spak he thus: O lady myn Criseyde,
Wher is your feyth, and wher is your biheste?
Wher is your love, wher is your trouthe, he seyde;
Of Diomed have ye now al this feste!
Allas, I wolde have trowed at the leste,
That, sin ye nolde in trouthe to me stonde,
That ye thus nolde han holden me in honde!

Who shal now trowe on any othes mo?
Allas, I never wolde han wend, er this,
That ye, Criseyde, coude han chaunged so;
Ne, but I hadde agilt and doon amis,
So cruel wende I not your herte, ywis,
To slee me thus; alas, your name of trouthe
Is now fordoon, and that is al my routhe.

Was ther non other broche yow liste lete
To fesse with your newe love, quod he,
But thilke broche that I, with teres wete,
Yow yaf, as for a remembraunce of me?
Non other cause, alas, ne hadde ye
But for despyt, and eek for that ye mente
Aloutrely to shewen your entente!

Through which I see that clene out of your minde
Ye han me cast, and I ne can nor may,
for al this world, within myn herte finde
To unloven yow a quarter of a day!
In cursed tyme I born was, weylaway!
That ye, that doon me al this wo endure,
Yet love I best of any creature.

Now God, quod he, me sende yet the grace
That I may meten with this Diomed!
And trewely, if I have might and space,
Yet shal I make, I hope, his sydes blede.
O God, quod he, that oughtest taken hede
To fortheren trouthe, and wronges to punyce,
Why niltow doon a vengeaunce on this vyce?

O Pandare, that in dremes for to triste
Me blamed hast, and wont art ofte upbreyde,
Now maystow see thyselfe, if that thee liste,
How trewe is now thy nece, bright Criseyde!
In sondry formes, God it woot, he seyde,
The goddes shewen bothe joye and tene
In slepe, and by my dreame it is now sene.

And certaynly, withoute more speche,
from hennesforth, as ferforth as I may,
Myn owene deeth in armes wol I seche;
I recche not how sone be the day!
But trewely, Criseyde, swete may,
Whom I have ay with al my might yservyd,
That ye thus doon, I have it nought deserved.

¶ This Pandarus, that alle these thinges herde,
And wiste wel he seyde a sooth of this,
He nought a word ayein to him answerde;
for sory of his frendes sorwe he is,
And shamed, for his nece hath doon amis;
And stant, astoned of these causes tweye,
As stille as stoon; a word ne coude he seye.

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